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CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC RAILROAD,  
ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL BRIDGE  
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Crossing I&M Canal,  
West of Johns Manville Corporation Factory  
Rockdale Vicinity  
Will County  
Illinois

HAER No. IL-103

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD  
CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC RAILROAD,  
ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL BRIDGE  
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor

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Location: I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor  
Rock Island Railroad crossing I&M Canal  
west of Johns Manville Corporation  
Factory  
Rockdale vicinity, Will County, Illinois

UTM: 16 E.404880 N.4594100  
Quad: Joliet

Date of Construction: 1911

Builder: American Bridge Company

Present Owner: Johns Manville Corporation and  
Caterpillar Tractor factories

Present Use: Railroad Bridge

Significance: Of the two surviving plate-girder swing  
bridges built across the I & M Canal,  
the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Canal  
Bridge is the only one which contains a  
center pivot pier. The others were  
built off-center to provide easy  
navigation for canal barges.

Project Information: The Illinois and Michigan Canal was  
designated a National Heritage Corridor  
in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER  
embarked on an extensive inventory and  
documentation project of the 100 mile-  
long corridor. Field work for this  
project was concluded in 1988. Final  
editing of the documentation was  
completed in 1992.

Historians: Gray Fitzsimons, 1987; Carolyn Brucken,  
1992.

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This manually operated, swing bridge was built in 1911 by the American Bridge Company for the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad (later called the Rock Island Railroad). No longer movable, the bridge is currently used as a rail spur into the Johns Manville Corporation and Caterpillar Corporation Tractor factories. The bridge is one of two railroad swing spans crossing the I & M Canal; it is the only swing span with the pivot pier in the center of the canal prism. The superstructure, composed of a riveted steel-plate deck-girder, measures about 90' in length and carries a single track. It rests on a concrete center pier and concrete abutments.

**SOURCES:**

State of Illinois, Division of Waterways, "Inspection of Structures Along the Illinois and Michigan Canal from LaSalle to Summit, Illinois," 1959, photo 142, (available at the I&M Canal State Park, Morris, Illinois).

State of Illinois, Division of Waterways, "Illinois-Michigan Canal Annual Inspection, November 1967," photo 179, (available at the I&M Canal State Park, Morris, Illinois).